

U.S. Appl. No. 09/924,823
Amendment Dated Apr. 30, 2004
Reply to Office Action of Jan. 2, 2004
Docket No. BOC9-2000-0083 (218)

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

These remarks are submitted responsive to the office action dated January 2, 2004 (Office Action). As this response is not timely filed within the three-month statutory period, a one month extension of time is herein requested. An appropriate fee for the extension has been included.

In paragraphs 5-6, claims 1, 3-4, 7-11, 13-16, 18-19, 21-22, and 25-27, have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,978,770 to Waytena, *et al.* (Waytena) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,832,451 to Flake, *et al.* (Flake). In paragraph 7, claims 5-6, 12, 17, and 23-24 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Waytena in view of Flake and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,499,359 to Vijaykumar (Vijaykumar).

In paragraph 8, the Examiner has indicated that claims 2 and 20 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all limitations of the claims upon which they depend.

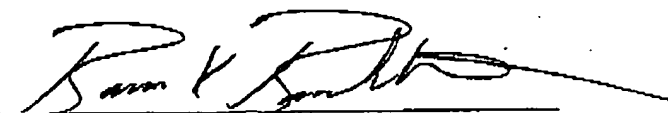
In response to the Office Action, Applicants have rewritten claim 1 to incorporate the limitations previously included in claim 2. Applicants have also rewritten claim 19 to incorporate the limitations of claim 20. Claims 2 and 20 have been canceled. Additionally, claims 8-18 and claim 26 have been canceled. It should be noted that the cancellation of the aforementioned claims should be considered as having occurred without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants have canceled the claims to expedite the prosecution of allowable subject matter, as indicated by the Examiner.

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Accordingly, the present application now consists of claims that the Examiner indicated as allowable in paragraph 8 of the Office Action. Consequently, Applicants believe that this application is now in full condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested. The Applicants request that the Examiner call the undersigned if clarification is needed on any matter within this Amendment, or if the Examiner believes a telephone interview would expedite the prosecution of the subject application to completion.

Respectfully submitted,

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Gregory A. Nelson, Registration No. 30,577
Kevin T. Cuenot, Registration No. 46,283
Brian K. Buchheit, Registration No. 52,667
AKERMAN SENTERFITT
Post Office Box 3188
West Palm Beach, FL 33402-3188
Telephone: (561) 653-5000